

SHOCO 2009 award winners will be announced during celebratory event

As his final act as outgoing AHATA CEO, Rob Smith will help honor all nominees

ORANJESTAD – Months-long efforts in the submission and subsequent evaluation of SHOCO Award of Excellence 2009 nominees will be realized with the announcement of this year's winners this coming Friday, during a celebration that will held at the Hyatt Regency. The Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA), together with its signature alliance partner Digicel, will help honor individuals who stand out for their outstanding abilities for hospitality and on the job in the tourism industry. Outgoing AHATA President and CEO Rob Smith will help honor all nominees, functioning as the master of ceremonies during the upcoming event.

With twice as many submissions as the year previous, the decision-making process by the panel of judges was not an easy matter, with several highly-qualified nominees present in each category. Winners will be named from among the following nominees: Employee of the Year: Allied company: Charles de Perri, Costa del Sol; Betty Rozanda Maduro, Red Sail Sports and Max Gumbs, De Palm Tours; Supervisor of the Year: Allied company: Judella Lacle-Tromp, De Palm Tours; Young Professional of the Year: Gerald Griffith, Hyatt Regency and Ruthline Tromp, Westin; Employee of the Year: Resort: Barbara Bird, Westin; Coral Berkel, Hyatt Regency; Maureen N.J. Martinez-Kelly, La Cabana; Dora Correa, The Aruban; Maria "Inca" Boye-Wernet, Bucuti; Calvin F. Schmidt, Divi; Charity Maduro-Kock, Amsterdam Manor; Joel Alcantara, Marriott; Sandra Steba,

Occidental and Erick Dania, Manchebo. Supervisor of the Year: Resort: Rosa Maduro, Radisson; Nadine Olivares, Westin; Gianni Dijkhoff, Hyatt Regency; Geertruida Elissen, Marriott; Myrna Ternal, Occidental; Margriet Geerman, The Aruban; Marguerita Doyley Osbourne, Bucuti; and Silvio Koolman, Renaissance. Manager of the Year: Resort: Oriana Carotenuto, Hyatt Regency; Anne Williams, Occidental; Eithel Petrochi, The Aruban; Patricia Jauregui, Amsterdam Manor; Glenn Franken, Renaissance; Mark Hollander, Radisson; and Paulien Provence, Westin. Lifetime Achievement: Eleanor Rustveld, Costa del Sol; Ramiro Rafael, Westin; George Hoek, Manchebo; and Edsel Davelaar, Occidental; and lastly, Digicel's Shoco Cares: Lilian Martis, Costa del Sol.

The annual awards, now in its 5th consecutive year, provide well-deserved recognition to individuals working within AHATA-member companies. The recognition of these individuals is made possible thanks to the support of Shoco's exclusive sponsor, Digicel. Also integral to the event, is the objective panel of judges, who volunteer their time and knowledge. The panel of judges includes Annelien Tromp, a manager with Caribbean Mercantile Bank, Carlos Albertus, Managing Director of B&P Interface International N.V. Training and Consultancy, and John Wardlaw, a professor at the University of Aruba. Tino Ruiz, a well-known DJ, has also volunteered his time and talents to help to enliven the upcoming



ceremony with musical entertainment. A final word of thanks goes to AHATA's own Rob Smith, who will function as the event's master of ceremonies, on the evening of his last official day as the President and CEO of AHATA. □



PALM BEACH -- The UltimateBet.com Charity Event unfolded at the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa. It was extremely successful, reports Fransisca van Esta Tjallingii, Asst. Manager of Catering & Convention Services. A total of \$18,220.00 was

At the Radisson Aruba Resort Casino & Spa Imeldahof Children's Home receives a donation

raised for Imeldahof Children's home, with a total of \$11,700 earned at the event -- \$5,000 donated by UltimateBet.com and \$1,520 paid by the winners who gave generously part of their earnings to benefit an excellent community cause. The money was presented to organizing committee representative Melissa Gaddis during the farewell banquet by winner Brandon Hall, 20, from Littleton, Pennsylvania, and the actual cheque was given to Dynia Muller, Director, Children's Home Imeldahof during a casual get-together at the resort's Mira Solo Martini

Bar. Muller reports the funds will be used to renovate the activity center and other pending projects. She wholeheartedly thanked UltimateBets for the very generous gift, and was pleased to hear from van Esta Tjallingii, that the organization intends to also include the children's home charity in the upcoming 2010 tournament, which will be held on the island next October. □



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Carol Bruyning returns home as International Queen of Divi Divi



ORANJESTAD – Recently Carol Bruyning was crowned International Queen of Divi Divi contest, which took place in Colombia. Bruyning, together with candidates from 20 different states of within country and other Caribbean islands participated in the contest. Bruyning arrived at the Queen Beatrix International Airport, where



she was welcomed home by family and friends. International Queen of Divi Divi contest has been organized for years in the Guajira City from Riohacha, during this season. □

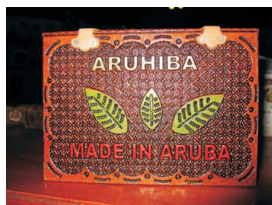


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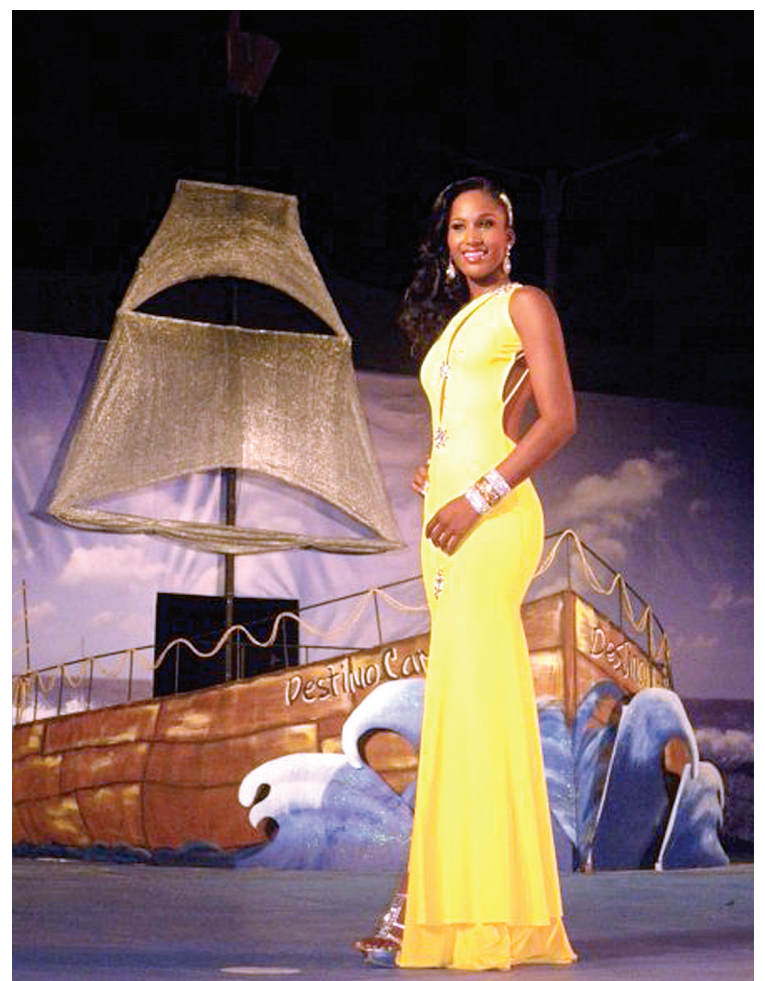
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ORANJESTAD- Benjamin Petrocchi started the newest export product of Aruba, locally produced cigars called "Aruhiba". These cigars are produced and cultivated in Aruba.

Petrocchi has always had an interest in the cigar business and has also sold Premium Cuban Cigars, and now he is growing his own tobacco crop. After many attempts and trips to Santo Domingo and Cuba he started his own production and cultivation of Aruhiba Cigars in Aruba. The process took ten years. Petrocchi dedication to the cigars is important for the molding and process of making a perfect cigar which takes a long time. The cigar box is specially designed for the cigars with the logo "Aruhiba". Petrocchi considers Aruhiba a promotion for Aruba through fine quality cigars. The company sells International cigars as well. Buy a gift box of Aruhiba Corona with five cigars and you will get 1 FREE cigar of \$35. Located at the Historic Dutch Windmill. Open on Sunday from 9am to 8pm. And also at Tamarijn Hotel open from 9am to 1pm. Aruhiba is only available in above mentioned stores. Visit our authentic tobacco farm where cigars are handmade.



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A tight race between Bier Hier and Synergy

Team Synergy is the winner of The Plaza Quiz Night Series!



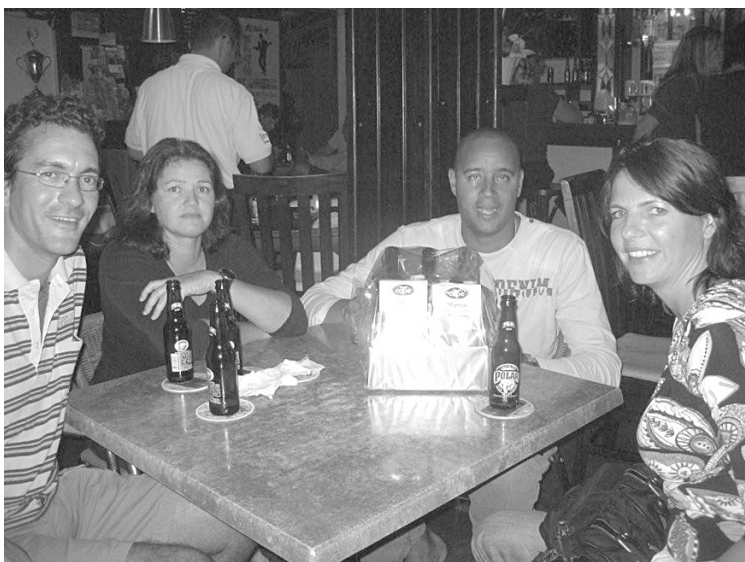
ORANJESTAD - The final evening of The Plaza Quiz Night Series was a tight, exciting happening. A full house, with a record of 63 participants, was present and they witnessed the downfall of Bier Hier. At half-time the former winners of various evenings of quizzing were in fifth place, but the unflagging concentration and wide knowledge of the team members took them to a second place overall in the end. Synergy, always a very strong, top contender, was the winner of the series with 35 points. Two new teams participated:

Fubar and Tjoller. Last Tuesday's questions included ones like: "what is the name of the human bone with as its medical name sternum? Who is the patron saint of children? Which cartoon character's real name is Norville Rogers? What is the largest art gallery in Russia? And How did Charles I of England die.

The answers to the questions are: breast bone, Saint Nicholas, Shaggy from Scooby Doo, the Hermitage and 'he was beheaded'.

Synergy got gift certificates from Amici for their superb efforts in the past weeks, while Bier Hier (31 pts) received a wine basket from the Arion Wine Company. Kamikaze (22 pts) is going on a Halloween trip aboard the Tattoo party boat and Eureka's quizzers are off to an afternoon of fun at Papa's Beach Bar. Congratulations to all the winners and participants.

The next series of The Plaza Quiz Night Series starts on Tuesday, October 27. New teams are welcome, just show up, pay AWG. 5,-- per person



and answer questions. The quiz evenings start at 8 pm sharp at Café the Plaza. Next Tuesday, when the quizzers have a lay day, The Plaza is organizing a special, educational Wine and

Cheese evening. For just US \$ 20.—you get to taste some formidable wines and nibble on exotic cheeses and get in-depth information about them during the process. Sounds intriguing indeed...□

Special Month of October!

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Dessert	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chocolate or Banana Cake • Ice Cream • Coffee / Tea

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Café Bingo! celebrates anniversary with crazy Upside Down weekend



Upside Down weekend, which means a florin for one US \$ extravaganza. Not only the food is in florin prices during the upcoming weekend, but also the drinks. "This is our way to thank our clientele for their continued support," said owner Frans de Rooij, who started Bingo! together with former colleague Mike van der Werk five years ago.

A new ceiling, a fresh coat of paint, new black shirts for the Bingo! employees, new aprons and a new lunch & dinner menu await the patrons. The menu looks terrific, with lunch salads like the Salmon Salad, an Asparagus Salad, a Mushroom Salad and a Pepper Steak. Newly added appetizers are the Salmon Wrap, the Chicken Vol au Vent, Coconut Shrimp and Tuna Tataki, while dinner options include Land & Sea, Entrecote, Pork Tenderloin and Grilled Salmon.

Frans de Rooij and Mike van der Werk knew each other in Holland: they worked together behind the bar of De Brands café in Goirle, Brabant, near Tilburg (in the south of Holland). Sixteen years ago, Frans (now 58) moved to Aruba. He started working behind the bar of Café the Plaza, and guess who followed three years later: Mike. The two super bartenders had a whale of a time there and the decision to start a place of their own was not difficult to make. As soon as they took over Captain's Corner in Noord, Bingo! was a hit. It is especially well-known for its hamburgers, considered to be the best on the island, and the carpaccio, but the salads are terrific as well and the desserts



have gained fame too. Bingo!'s catering service is doing very well indeed, changing the name in "Flavors Catering & Events" starting soon on its new location at Bubali, with a long list of satisfied clients requiring its service time and time again. With its two owners hailing from Holland, Bingo! celebrates Dutch highlights throughout the year: the first herring is worth a great party, as are the mussels. And although they might not be aware of it, the players of the Dutch national soccer team can count on fervent 'appoyo' from Aruba: its fans all dress up in orange and go wild and crazy in front of Bingo's big screen. The Upside Down weekend

with florin prices starts on Friday, October 16 at lunch time. In the evening, the band Talent Ltd. with singer Sjoerd van der Vaart performs live on stage. On Saturday evening it is Lotus with vocalist Rien Hurkmans that is playing. On Sunday afternoon children are welcome to come and jump in the jumping castle, see the clowns do their tricks, eat cotton candy and popcorn and ride a pony in front of Bingo! starting at 4 pm. Mike and Frans are welcoming everyone who comes to celebrate. You might want to make reservations because expectations are that Bingo! will be jammed... No wonder!

During a special associate luncheon

Westin's cream of the crop associates recognized



PALM BEACH-Recently, The Westin Resort, Aruba held the award's ceremony for the Brand Champions of the Month for August in the resort's Cabaret Royale.

Associates enjoyed a lavish buffet prepared by the culinary team that included slow-cooked beef ribs, fresh fish, a full salad and deli bar, and dessert.

The associates nominated exemplify the core values recognized by Westin, including providing personal touches and personalized services to 'surprise and delight' every guest, proactively anticipating guests' needs and making them feel special, and recognizing the special touches offered by Westin to help

guests restore the body, expand the mind, and elevate the spirit so they leave not only rested, but also renewed and enriched.

The winners among the nominees for the month of August were: Renny Richardson from the Fun department who was a true hero when he rescued a child in trouble in the resort's pool; and Albert Arce who was recognized for going above and beyond during a time when multiple events were taking place and adeptly stepping up to take the helm of the kitchen in the resort's flagship restaurant, Pago Pago.

Congratulations to all! □

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Premiering this Saturday:

Come visit Club CILO, with DJ J-Star and his club beats



Club CILO is premiering this coming Saturday, October 17, and everyone is invited. Popular DJ J-Star is in superb form and the music is club beats. Club CILO promises an eclectic mix of relaxed lounging interspersed with hot action. Expect various drink specials as well as Absolut surprises, so everybody will be happy. No cover charge for CILO, of course: this is one inviting, cool place. Club CILO is a weekly happening from 11 pm – 3 am.

CILO on the corner of the Renaissance Marketplace near the Cinemas, offers suave nightlife with a marina view. Wide screens, a great bar and an inviting décor inside vie for attention with

the two outside terraces. Seated on the marina terrace, one can enjoy 'seeing and be seen' by the cars that pass by; the other terrace, on the side, is more private, but just as much fun. You can lounge the night away with ease there.

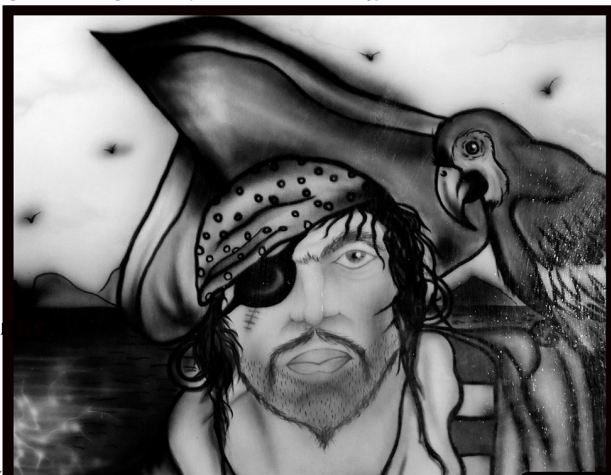
But it is not just nightlife that has CILO buzzing with anticipation and excitement: during the day the place is filled with people having breakfast, lunch, dinner, drinks or coffee. Meeting friends has become a lot easier on Aruba, now that CILO has opened its doors. Its innovative interior and modern feel has made many locals and tourists into CILO fans already. And if you have not visited the place as yet: it is high time! ☐

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El Gaucho Restaurant ta solicita:

Executive Chef

Requirements:

Minimal 5 years of professional cooking and kitchen management experience.

Must be able to hire, train and direct kitchen staff and maximize kitchen productivity and personnel performance.

Plan menu's, assure quality control and food cost control.

Ability to communicate in Papiamentu and Spanish is preferred.

If interested and qualified, please send your cv to michel@elgaucho-aruba.com or deliver it personally at our offices in Wilhelminastraat 80.

At Casa Tua Barcelona

Pepia Est to present "El Sabor de Barcelona"

ORANJESTAD - On Friday November 6th Restaurant Casa Tua Barcelona together with Pepia Est Trading Company are creating a deliciously fun evening aptly named 'El Sabor de Barcelona'.

Just 'picture' yourself on La Rambla, the vibrant promenade and the aorta of Barcelona; packed with great food, great wine, music and art. On November 6th, we will recreate that ambience,

with a delicious 4 course menu, accompanied by some great Mediterranean wines. And to spice things up the 'Cataluña' way, everyone is invited to brush off the artistic genes during a bottle painting contest. There is even an Award for best painted bottle. To complete this 'taste of Barcelona' event we throw in a live Flamenco Show between the dinner courses. The menu consists of: Gazpacho, a Traditional

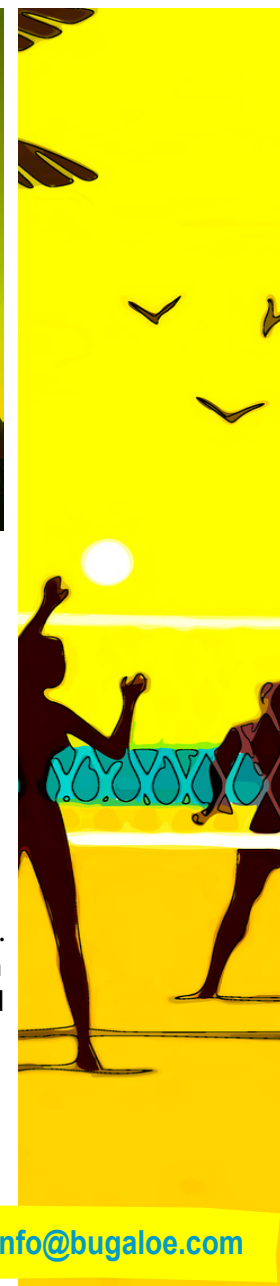
Cold Spanish Tomato Soup paired with Villa Sandi Valdobbiadene Prosecco, Italy WS86 followed by a Chorizo al Sidra which is a Spanish Sausage served in a Cider Sauce paired with Bodegas Julian Chivite, Gran Fuedo Rosé, Spain 2005 WS87. For the main course, you have the choice of Grouper 'Ballotine' which is a Grouper Fillet stuffed with crab meat along with light white butter sauce and Morels Mushrooms served with Mezzacorona Chardonnay, Italy 2007 WS87 Or The Butcher's Cut which is a Grilled Hanger Steak with a Shallots Sauce paired with Campo Viejo Gran Reserva, Rioja 2001 WS85.

The evening will culminate with a Rainbow Sabayon complimented by Mumm Demi Sec, Argentina NV. □



BUGALOE BEACH VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT

Sunday November 8th
Starts: 9:00am



MENU ITEMS

Burgers, Pizzas, Salads
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PALM BEACH - Sunday
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organizing the 4th edition
of the Bugaloe Beach
Volleyball Tournament.

Locals and tourists are teaming up to participate in this funfilled tournament that takes place on the white powered sand of Palm Beach right in front of Bugaloe Beach Bar. There will be 3 team categories FUN (6 players),

ADVANCED (4 players) and PRO (2 players). In a relaxed ambience several **celebrity DJ's** will play the best tunes while you can enjoy special prices on Amstel Bright and Heineken beer. You are welcome to visit, even if you are not playing. Don't miss it!

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Palm Beach between
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The after party takes place at Bugaloe Beach Bar with a popular live band on stage. Put the date in your calendar today. Fun guaranteed!

Registration

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Certified Angus Beef hosts an educational seminar



ORANJESTAD – The very best beef available – the Certified Angus Beef® brand, is so good that less than 8% of all beef makes the grade, said celebrity Chef Peter Vaulty, who was asked by the brand to go to Aruba in order to host a Sizzlin’ Steakhouse Seminar at the Renaissance Convention Center. The brand, continued Vaulty

Angus Beef® brand sets the bar to earn a premium mark. The seminar was co-hosted by Elizabeth Wunderlich, Caribbean Consultant for US Pork and the US Beef Federation. Aruban-based Arion Wine company joined in the mix to facilitate delicious food pairings with three major wine brands Wente Vineyards, Ravenswood and Kendall-



Jackson. The Certified Angus Beef Program was formed in 1978 to provide assurances of beef quality and flavor to consumers, informs Wunderlich, and the organization is dedicated to teaching consumers and professionals and raising US Pork & Beef sales internationally. Celebrity chef Peter Vaulty, co-owner of Red, the steakhouse in South Beach, Miami, Florida, and two restaurants is Cleveland, Ohio, Moxie, the restaurant, and Red, the Steakhouse, often speaks on behalf of the Certified Angus Beef® brand to food & beverage professionals, which was the case in Aruba where he informed and entertained



famous local chefs and even the EPI student-team who won first place in the island’s recent Chef & Student Culinary Festival. While on the island Vaulty will also serve as guest chef for the upcoming autumn special, kicking off on Friday, at the heart of town L.G. Smith’s Steak & Chop house, located



at the Renaissance Marina Resort. Joining Vaulty in the kitchen, Chef Gomez and Chef Lie-Kwie, who will help produce the special menu during the next six weeks. The menu boasts a variety of contemporary classic appetizers, beef dishes featuring Certified Angus Beef brand Prime, and novel desserts. Each of the fall menu dishes will be accompanied by a special wine suggestion, available by the glass or bottle. Pictured here Peter Vaulty cooking exhibition style and talking about Certified Angus Beef cuts, as paired with lovely wines. □



is committed to excellence and to delivering incredibly flavorful, tender and juicy beef cuts for use in licensed restaurants around the globe. As a matter of fact, he explained to his audience, not all beef passes the 10 stringent quality specifications imposed by the brand, and while other labels may say Angus, that’s where the similarities end. The difference is in the flavor. And that’s where the Certified



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TOMORROW
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*Estimated savings compares each U.S. hybrid vehicle’s EPA combined mpg rating with its segment average based on latest EPA Trends Report (driven 15,000 miles annually). Actual mileage will vary. ©2009



Moving Forward

toyota-future.com

Happy Birthday Emma Muller – Winklaar



who came from near and far to congratulate her on her special day. Mamita's all-grown-up kids Astrid – yes, the famed hotelier -- Sonja, Dynia, Aldo & Giantonio joined by 11 grandchildren, neighbors and acquaintances hailing from Bonaire, Curacao, St Maaten,



ORANJESTAD -- Emma Muller – Winklaar, lovingly known as Mamita or Ms. Emma, celebrated her 80th birthday just recently at a tremendous, traditional Harvest Party, surrounded by family members and friends

the Netherlands, Argentina & Canada, danced to the music of the Rincon Boyz, imported on the occasions from the island of Bonaire and enjoyed

a Creole style buffet loaded with delicious specialties. Mamita, we wish you many more years of health and happiness. □



Read ARUBA TODAY every day

Bijleveld:

No figures about influx of Dutch businesses



THE HAGUE--The new statuses for the BES islands Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba have the attention of the Dutch private sector without a doubt, but there are as yet

no figures projecting the possible influx of Dutch real estate agents, project developers and food and beverage entrepreneurs. Dutch State Secretary for Kingdom

Relations Ank Bijleveld-Schouten said this in response to questions posed by Member of the Dutch Parliament Hero Brinkman of Party for Freedom PVV. Brinkman had sought clarity on media reports that the Dutch real estate "underworld" was "descending" on Bonaire.

Bijleveld-Schouten said Wednesday that she didn't have information about a growing number of Dutch companies heading to the BES islands, as the registration of such data was an authority of the Central Government of the Netherlands Antilles.

She said Bonaire's physical planning had her attention and that of the local government. A preparatory decree that prevents "undesired development" has become effective. Zoning plans are being drawn up, financed through the Social Economic Initiative (SEI) and with Dutch technical

assistance.

Referring to a question by Brinkman about selling property to Dutch businesspeople by "corrupt Bonaire politicians," the State Secretary said the General Audit Chamber had determined in May that Bonaire's previous Executive Council had granted land in long lease against the principles of good governance.

It is the task of the Antillean Prosecutor's Office to investigate suspicions of corruption and, if there are well-founded reasons, to prosecute, she explained.

If there is reason for a new investigation after the transition date of October 2010, the Prosecutor's Office of Bonaire, St. Eustatius and Saba will be in charge. The State Secretary said that if she had concrete information about corruption, she would pass it on to the Prosecutor's Office. □



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RIL closes in on overseas buy

Valero's 235,000 bpd Aruba refinery has been on the block since 2007.



MUMBAI: Reliance Industries, India's biggest refiner, may buy a refinery or a chemicals unit before the end of the year in the US or Europe as it attempts to buy up inexpensive assets and catch up with rivals Essar, who are aggressively bidding for global capacities despite lagging behind Reliance locally. "We are in advanced talks with looking at refinery and petrochemical units for acquisition in the US and Europe, mostly in the US," Maurice Bannayan, senior vice-president at RIL, was

quoted as saying by Reuters news agency on Wednesday.

The RIL overseas acquisition buzz started getting louder last month when it raised Rs 3,188 crore by selling its treasury shares. Also, India's second-biggest private oil refiner Essar Oil have bid to acquire UK's largest oil refinery, operated by The Royal Dutch Shell. The Ruia's run Essar also brought a 50% stake in Kenya's oldest oil refinery in Mombassa for an undisclosed amount, even as one of Reliance's unit in Europe went bankrupt.

An RIL spokesperson declined to comment. The targets for Reliance may be many, analysts speculate. Assets of Italy's Eni, US's Valero Energy Corporation and Sunoco, Royal Dutch Shell's Stanlow, Harburg and Heide refineries, the Grangemouth refinery operated by British chemicals maker Ineos, and Swissbased Petroplus's UK refinery could be some of the targets, analysts say.

"Be it refineries or petrochemical units, they are available dirt cheap due to falling demand," said an equity analyst with a Mumbai-based brokerage firm. "Most of US and European refiners and chemical firms have been looking to sell domestic refineries as demand for fuels

and petrochemical products has fallen more sharply than most other areas of the world." RIL has cash reserves to the tune of \$5 billion.

Valero Energy, which operates 16 refineries stretching from California to Canada to the Caribbean, with a combined capacity of processing three million barrels per day (bpd) of crude oil, is planning to shut down and sell some of them due to steep fall in refining margins. Valero's 235,000 bpd Aruba refinery has been on the block since 2007.

"The company is not necessarily willing to sell any refineries, but strategic alternatives would include possible refinery or unit shutdowns to contend with crushed demand in the recession," an international newswire quoted last week Valero's spokesman Bill Day as saying. Sunoco, which shuttered its 100,000 bpd Eagle Point refinery in the US due to falling demand, plans to sell its chemical business.

"We don't see it getting better any time quickly," chief executive Lynn Elsenhans told analysts on a conference call recently. It would decide on the fate of its chemicals business later this year as it examines the bids, she had said. □

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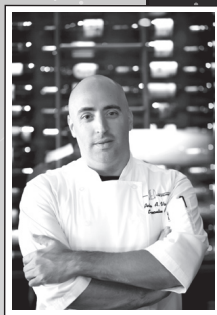
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Star Mazda Championship 2009 Races to be Broadcast on Speed TV to More Than 40 Latin American Countries

Including Aruba

LOS ANGELES -- The Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear and P-UNO Motorsports TV today announced the signing of a contract with SPEED Channel Latin America to broadcast seven races of the 2009 STAR Mazda Series Presented by Goodyear championship. Seven of the Star Mazda Championships 13 races from the 2009 season are part of the package, including the season-opener at the 12 Hours of Sebring, Round 2 at Virginia International Raceway and Rounds 4 and 5 from the Mazda Formula X double-header at New Jersey Motorsports Park as well as Rounds 8 and 9 from the Harrah's Autobahn Grand Prix presented by Mazda double-header at Autobahn and Round 10, the legendary street race in Trois Rivières in Quebec, Canada. In total, SPEED Latin America will broadcast the Star Mazda Championship races to more than 40 countries (or territories), including all of the most important racing markets: Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Venezuela. In addition, races will be broadcast in Anguilla, Aruba, Antigua, the Bahamas, Barbados, Barbuda, Belize, Bolivia, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Costa Rica, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guadalupe, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Martinique, Montserrat, Netherlands Antilles, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Christopher (St. Kitts) and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Marten, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands and Uruguay. Los Angeles-based P-UNO Motorsports TV has a 5-

year agreement to broadcast the Pro Star Mazda Series Presented by Goodyear in Latin America. P-UNO principals are Hector Cademartori, world-renowned motorsports artist and a journalist for 35 years and Pedro Serramallera, a long time racing enthusiast and also a driver in the Star Mazda Championship. The main targets of the project are three fold: to promote the series in Latin America, to inform drivers from that part of the world about the Star Mazda Championship and encourage them to further their careers by racing in North America, and to generate exposure for the sponsors of South American drivers in their home markets. Serramallera and Cademartori will provide voiceover commentary in Spanish and SPEED will provide a version in Portuguese for the Brazilian market. "It's not all the races, but enough to give our audience south of the border a good idea of what this series is all about," says P-UNO co-founder Pedro Serramallera. "Furthermore, two of them (Sebring and VIR), will be world premieres since they have not been aired anywhere, yet. SPEED Latin America is planning to show each race at least twice every week, beginning in early November. We'll let everyone know as soon as we have the final schedule." The 2010 season will mark the 20th year of the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear, one of the most stable and successful open-wheel driver development series in North America. Both title sponsors are major global corporations and their contracts with the Series run through the 2013 season. The Star Mazda Championship the college basketball,

the triple-A baseball of auto racing, a high-speed training ground for future stars of the sport and a major step on the MAZDASPEED Motorsports Development Ladder and automaker-supported scholarship program that provides funding for young champions to move up from karting to the top levels of the sport. Star Mazda Championship racers are high-tech open-wheel cars powered by Mazda's legendary 'Rensis' rotary; top speed exceed 160 mph and 0 to 60 mph acceleration takes just 2.8 seconds. The 'single-spec' engineering of Star Mazda Championship race cars showcases driving talent instead of big budgets. Expert (30 to 44 years old) and Master (45 and older) categories, run as a race-within-a-race, provides competition for more mature drivers in whom the competitive fire still burns brightly. The series races on major motorsports weekends and the 13-race, 11-weekend 2009 schedule includes races on road courses, street circuits and ovals. A uniquely diverse group of drivers was part of the Star Mazda Championship series in 2009, including racers from the U.S., Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, England, Ireland and Japan as well as drivers ranging in age from 16 to 51. Total prizes for 2009 approach \$1.5 million, including a Mazda-sponsored drive for the Star Mazda series champion in the next step up the motorsports ladder, the Atlantic Championship Powered by Mazda. With additional exciting announcements to be made in the in coming weeks, the 2010 Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear is poised to step up to the to new heights of popularity and success. □

GEBE cuts power at Festival Village

~ Roy calls move unfair, embarrassing ~

PHILIPSBURG--St. Maarten's Festival Village was without electricity for two days after utility company GEBE disconnected power to the facility for a long-outstanding unpaid bill. After intervention by GEBE's Supervisory Board, electricity was reconnected after 8:00pm Wednesday, but no indication was given whether payment had been made or whether a compromise had been reached.

According to well-placed and reliable sources, GEBE claims that St. Maarten Carnival Development Foundation (SCDF) has an outstanding bill of approximately Naf. 60,000 that dates back some two years. GEBE reportedly had informed Stichting Overheids Gebouwen (SOG), the entity that currently manages the Festival Village, that the electricity would not be reconnected if the outstanding bill was not paid.

SOG officials said GEBE had been informed during the upgrading of the Festival Village that any bills accumulated at the Village prior to its reconstruction would remain the responsibility of SCDF and the Island Government.

Outstanding amounts for electricity have never been an issue for the Carnival Foundation or for government, as these

were written off by former GEBE management headed by former managing director Julius Lambert as donations to Carnival.

Previous and current Carnival boards have unsuccessfully sought meetings with current GEBE Managing Director William Brooks to ascertain if he intends to continue the practice of writing off electricity cost for the Carnival season. SCDF officials said they had never been granted an audience with Brooks.

With no electricity at the venue, SOG and Heineken could not start preparing the Village for the Heineken Green Synergy event this Saturday. With the prospect of a potentially embarrassing international incident looming, DP Island Councilman Roy Marlin stepped into the fray on Wednesday and called on GEBE management to do the right thing for St. Maarten and spare the island further embarrassment.

Marlin said GEBE should maintain the practice of its former managing director by donating or writing off the SCDF electricity bill after every Carnival season.

"This was GEBE's contribution to the Carnival Foundation. Management knows that the Carnival Foundation does not have that kind of money. Why not just

give back to the foundation? GEBE also benefits during Carnival season with a spike in electricity usage," Marlin said. He said he could not understand how SOG was going to be held responsible for an outstanding amount that had been accumulated during Carnival, "and it's not even Carnival now. It is totally unfair to SCDF and SOG. We have an international event coming up with international artists, corporate sponsors have committed funds, and you cut off electricity now?"

"If Management refuses to write off SCDF's debt, management of GEBE should at least find a more flexible way for the foundation to pay it, maybe over a two-year term. But this sort of action is totally unfair," Marlin said.

When contacted for comment, GEBE's Commercial Manager Steve Duzanson said, "Normally the installation used to be disabled between major events, at the request of the promoter or organiser, the logic being that one organiser could then allocate all expenses of the event to the event's budget. The use of electricity for an event has to be charged to the event's organiser. After the event, GEBE would disable the installation until a new request had been submitted for reactivation."

That explanation, however, was

pertinent to the old Carnival Village which was built from plywood and had to be enclosed with containers whenever a concert was scheduled to be held there. In that scenario, GEBE had to connect and disconnect following each concert. The Festival Village, with its permanent concrete booths, eliminated the need for this practice. Since its inception, electricity has always been connected, on a constant basis, following every event, and has never been an issue with GEBE until Tuesday. Users of the Village do not pay SOG; payments go to the Island Receiver.

The Village is a government-run facility, and as such, government is responsible for its cost, including electricity. SOG also maintains a year-round office at the facility. SOG officials said they were having a hard time understanding that GEBE did not know this after the Village has been around and hosting events for three years.

Duzanson added: "In this case I am not sure who is responsible for this event: Island Government, Festival Village, SCDF or Heineken? Nevertheless, once we receive confirmation in writing, we will comply with the request. That is what has happened and we will proceed accordingly." □

Aruba TODAY

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AP Asks If Obama Is 'Obnoxiously Articulate'

The Nation -- Political reporters have now toggled from worrying that Obama gets "too much" media coverage to asking whether he is "too" good at communicating through the media. Maybe even obnoxiously good. Maybe even -- here comes that loaded word from the primaries -- too articulate.

The A.P.'s Liz Sidoti is on the case. And this is from a news article:

Obama has been a constant presence in the mass media as he expands the bureaucracy's reach into the private sector.... In doing so, he has created a quandary. Put aside for a moment the question of whether government is actually intruding into people's lives more than before. The point is that many people feel like it is -- in part because Obama doesn't stop talking about his goals. If President George W. Bush got slapped around for being inarticulate, is Obama obnoxiously articulate?

What a quandary!

Once you "put aside" the actual facts and policy debate, there's that President talking on the TV about "his goals" -- and talking so articulately -- it just makes you wonder if the government is going to tell you how to mow your lawn. Or something. The article doesn't really try to support its own premise, as blogger Brendan Nyhan explains:

Sidoti is forced to admit later in the piece that she has no empirical support for her claim:

While Obama has been criticized for being too visible, AP-GfK surveys in the spring and summer found that most people say he is on TV about the right amount.

If the "political" hook is that all this might matter because voters want different prime time programming, that's wrong, too. Note that we only "know" this because pollsters are spending money to ask whether The President is on TV too much. (On the list of frivolous things that get too much airtime, the federal government and leader of the free world are near the bottom.) And then, just to round out the media madness, one of Nyhan's commenters did a little research and found the same A.P. reporter wrote an article last month about Obama failing to articulate his vision to the public. How obnoxious.

[N]o one seems to know what the president seeks [on health care]..."I don't know what he wants to do," says Phil Axworthy, a Pittsburgh software developer. A failure of leadership? Or simply a failure to communicate?

Are those things the same when a complicated issue is so important to so many? And if a president can't articulate his vision on something so sprawling and all-encompassing, how can he lead? ☐

*** Human Hints Daily ***

Trick Your Ego to Unify Your Purpose

Do you look to your hologram to define your life, or do you tell the hologram what to create? We have become so accustomed to the hologram dictating our lives to us, that we have all but forgotten the fact that we actually tell the hologram what to

create. Our three dimensional lives reflect our thoughts and emotions. It is logical to think that we are a product of our environment, but our environment is actually is a product of our selves.

Ego is necessary for a spirit to interact with three dimensions, because ego protects the physical body. It is based on separation, so it is insecure and needs confirmation from the three dimensional world. This is one way we become trapped in thinking that our environment defines us.

Getting confirmation from the hologram can be a supercharging experience. There is no thrill like success, but over time, we have come to rely on the confirmation, which leads us to thinking that the hologram defines us. As soon as we shift our energy from Creator to follower, we give away our power of creation and become a slave to whatever life brings. When we neither need nor want confirmation of our Inherent Creative Power, then the power remains within us as the sensation of subtle, unassailable knowledge that we create our lives.

When we watch the news, read books and gather information from sources outside of our own intuition, we rely on the hologram to tell us what is real, thereby surrendering our inherent power of creation. We can use this learned weakness to our advantage when we turn things around in our mind.

Instead of watching the news, imagine yourself watching it. As you read the Breaking News headline blanket the screen. "You, (Your Name Here), Are Abundant In Every Way," Dan Rather or Katie Courick interrupt their broadcast and proudly proclaim, "This just in. It has been confirmed that you, (Your Name Here), are now abundant in every way. There is no longer lack in your life. You are officially a multimillionaire and your family loves and cherishes you. Now back to other news."

Now you turn off the TV in your mind and bask in the sensation.

Remember what you just saw and heard. You

have appealed to your ego on it's playing field, and confirmed to your it that your desires are a three dimensional reality. Ego will no longer resist your efforts and it will help clear your mind of unnecessary obstacles.

With your ego temporarily out of the way, it will be easier for other aspects of your Being to align toward a singular, Unified Purpose. This will create the massive force necessary to act on the zero point energy, the infinite disorganized energy that is the fabric of three dimensional spacetime.

When your physical, emotional, logical, spiritual and other aspects become Unified toward a Unified Purpose, you generate a powerful resonance that shapes the zero point energy into your three dimensional hologram. Your energetic resonance also collapses Time, so the more you align, the more quickly it will manifest.

Imagine yourself in different abundant situations in the future.

Whatever you desire, imagine yourself surrounded by it. Know that it is here, now, and focus on the sensations in your body.

Align your physical, emotional, logical, spiritual and other bodies to generate a resonance in the zero point energy that manifests the three dimensional hologram that you consciously create.

Until Tomorrow...

Go to www.HumanHints.com to sign up to receive this column in your email each day.

~Quentin Danziger

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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Aruba TODAY



FILE - In this March 16, 2009, file photo, Aaron Wilson, right, of Pasadena, Calif., a recently hired worker with the California Conservation Corps, clears hiking trails with other CCC workers in the San Bernardino National Forest in Hemet, Calif. Eight of the 18 CCC workers were hired by the U.S. Forest Service as part of the recently approved federal stimulus plan. Businesses that received federal contracts under the economic stimulus are reporting more than 30,000 jobs saved or created in the first months of the program.

(AP Photo/Chris Pizzello, file)

South benefits from stimulus construction boost

By MATT APUZZO
BRETT J. BLACKLEDGE,
Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON — U.S. businesses reported creating or saving more than 30,000 jobs in the first months of President Barack Obama's stimulus program, with military construction leading the way and states in the South and Southwest seeing the biggest boost, according to a government oversight board.

The numbers in its report, released Thursday, are based on jobs linked to less than \$16 billion in federal contracts and represent just a sliver of the \$787 billion stimulus package. But they offer the first hard data on the early effects of the program. Until now, the White House has relied on economic models to argue that the program created jobs and eased the recession. Critics point to rising unemployment to argue it wasn't worth the cost.

Obama has set a goal of creating or saving 3.5 million jobs by the end of next year. The construction industry had the strongest job numbers in Thursday's report, accounting for about a third of the jobs thanks to contracts to repair military bases. Environmental jobs also provided a big boost. The contractor in charge of cleaning the nation's most contaminated nuclear site said nearly 2,200 jobs had been created in southwest Washington state.

Colorado posted the largest increase of any state, more than 4,700 jobs, largely thanks to a contract to set up a call center to field questions about a change to digital cable. California, Florida, Tennessee and Texas also showed strong gains. New England fared poorly, with fewer than 750 jobs reported across the region. Rhode Island, which has the third-highest unemployment rate in the country, reported the weakest job numbers, both overall and per capita. Businesses there reported creating about six jobs.

Broader numbers on local stimulus spending, for everything from repairing public housing and building schools to repaving highways and keeping teachers off the unemployment lines, won't be available until late this month.

Stocks rise as energy gains offset drop in banks

By TIM PARADIS,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — Stocks ended modestly higher as rising energy stocks offset weakness in financial stocks.

The moderate gains Thursday come a day after major indexes jumped on strong profit reports from JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Intel Corp.

JPMorgan helped set a high bar for banks, and investors didn't like as much what they heard Thursday from rivals Goldman Sachs and Citigroup.

Oil soared \$2.40 to \$77.58 a barrel as refiners slashed production.

The Dow Jones industrial average is up 47 at 10,063. The Standard & Poor's 500 index is up 5 at 1,097. The Nasdaq composite index is up 1 at 2,173.

Advancing stocks narrowly outpaced those that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 1.4 billion shares, about the same as Wednesday.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. Check back soon for further information. AP's earlier story is below.

NEW YORK (AP) — Investors held off making big moves after earnings reports from Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and Citigroup Inc. brought reminders of the troubles banks still face.

Stocks zigzagged Thursday afternoon, a day after major indexes vaulted to their highest levels in a year on strong profit reports from JPMorgan Chase & Co. and Intel Corp. The Dow Jones industrials wavered around the 10,000 level, having pierced through the psychological barrier the day before for the first time since last October.

A jump in oil lifted energy stocks, which buffered some of losses in financial stocks.



Trader Joseph Marando, foreground, works on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

JPMorgan helped set a high bar for bank earnings, and investors didn't like as much what they heard from rivals Goldman Sachs and Citigroup. Goldman's net income of \$3.19 billion beat expectations on strong trading profits, but its stock fell on disappointment over a sharp fall in investment banking revenues. Citigroup reported a slightly smaller loss per share than expected but said credit losses remain high.

Investors drew some comfort from government reports that new unemployment claims fell more than expected last week and that manufacturing activity in the New York region has improved.

"Things are going in the right direction but the fundamental economic improvement is slow," said Robert Dye, senior economist at PNC Financial Services Group. "The tendency is for the markets to get ahead of themselves and have to be rebalanced periodically."

The day's moves were modest, and traders weren't alarmed to see some consolidation the day after such a strong rally. Major stock indexes have rocketed off of 12-year lows in March

but remain well below the highs of two years ago.

Seeing the Dow Jones industrials at five digits for the first time in a year could spook some traders who worry that stocks have been too quick to rebound. Others say that skepticism is a signal that the market will continue to defy expectations and advance.

Analysts expect corporate earnings reports will shape trading for the next several weeks. Google Inc., IBM Corp. and chip maker Advanced Micro Devices are slated to report results after the closing bell. With big numbers from technology companies imminent, traders didn't make big moves.

In late afternoon trading, the Dow rose 4.69, or 0.1 percent, to 10,020.55. The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.35, or less than 0.1 percent, to 1,092.37. The Nasdaq composite index fell 4.26, or 0.2 percent, to 2,167.97.

Falling stocks narrowly outpaced those that rose on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to 928.8 million shares compared with 915.2 million shares traded at the same point Wednesday. □

Queen slips out for quiet date with hubby

LONDON (Reuters) — Britain's Queen Elizabeth stunned theater-goers in London this week when she and her husband slipped in to see a play unannounced and at the last minute, newspapers reported.

The queen and Prince Philip apologetically squeezed past other theater-goers to get into their seats for the West End production of World War One play "War Horse" at the New London Theater.

"The Queen and the Duke sat down as the lights dimmed and it was a huge shock when people realized who they were," said a journalist at the show for The Lady magazine. "They were incredibly apologetic for asking people to let them past and there

was no hubbub or fuss about it all."

The queen and her husband often make incognito trips to the West End, but are rarely spotted, an aide told London's Evening Standard newspaper.

"The Queen has regularly undertaken similar private visits throughout her reign without any fuss," the aide said. "It allows her to live a bit more of a normal life."

The journalist from The Lady said the queen appeared to enjoy the performance, disappeared during the interval and then reappeared discreetly.

"When they left at the end, they were given a round of applause, which the Queen acknowledged with a wave," she said.



Britain's Queen Elizabeth II listens to her husband Prince Philip, as they arrive at St. Paul's Cathedral in London, Friday Oct. 9, 2009, to attend a service of Commemoration to mark the end of combat operations in Iraq. Britain's combat operations in Iraq formally ended on April 30, six years after the US-led invasion to topple Saddam Hussein in March 2003. During that time, more than 100,000 members of the armed forces and civilian personnel served in Iraq and 179 British servicemen and women were killed.

(AP Photo/John Stillwell, pool)

Dancing With the Stars' plans Jackson tribute

NEW YORK — "Dancing With the Stars" says it plans to honor Michael Jackson with a special performance by the 16 professional dancers participating in this season's competition.

The hour will pay tribute to the King of Pop with a medley of Jackson songs representing different eras of his long career, in a fusion of classic ballroom and Latin styles.

One member of the "Dancing With the Stars" troupe, Cheryl Burke, says Jackson and his music are "an inspiration to every dancer." Being part of this tribute, she says, "is an



FILE - In this April 20, 2002 file picture, Michael Jackson performs 'Dangerous' during the taping of the American Bandstand's 50th anniversary show in Pasadena, Calif.

(AP Photo/Kevork Djansezian, file)

honor."

The program airs Tuesday on ABC TV. □

CBS plans memorial for '60 Minutes' founder

NEW YORK — CBS is planning a memorial service for the creator and longtime executive producer of "60 Minutes."

The service for television pioneer Don Hewitt will be held Monday at the Time Warner Center in New York. Hewitt died of cancer in August at age 86.

In addition to his work at "60 Minutes," Hewitt also produced the first televised presidential debate in 1960.

Speakers at the memorial service will include CBS chief executive Leslie Moonves (MOON'-vess), actor Alan Alda, "60 Minutes" correspondent Morley Safer and Hewitt's successor at the



FILE - In this 1995 file photo, the late Don Hewitt, executive producer of '60 Minutes,' is shown in New York.

(AP Photo/Mark Lennihan, file)

helm of the newsmagazine, Jeff Fager (FAY'-gur).

CBS paid tribute to the late

longtime anchor Walter Cronkite in a public memorial service a month ago.

Mays' family: Review finds no chronic cocaine use

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO, Associated Press Writer

TAMPA, Fla. — The family of TV pitchman Billy Mays released the findings of an independent medical examiner Thursday, who concluded that the infomercial star's cocaine use was not a significant contributing factor in his sudden death. The report, released by a family spokeswoman, does not refute Mays' cocaine use, but states there is no evidence to suggest he was a chronic user. A review of the official autopsy also concludes that "cocaine was not a significant contributing factor" in his death.

"There is no evidence that Mr. Mays' death was related to acute cocaine intoxication with coronary artery spasm

or dissection or even aortic dissection for that matter," wrote Dr. William Manion, the independent medical examiner who conducted the review. "Rather, the use of cocaine by Mr. Mays appears to have occurred a remote time several days before his death."

Mays, 50, was found dead in his family's Tampa condo in June. The Hillsborough County medical examiner's office conducted the official autopsy. The office classified his death as "natural" but said that cocaine use contributed to the heart disease that killed him. Mays' family disagreed with that finding.

"We found this to be so upsetting that we asked for review by an independent medical examiner," Deborah Mays, the

late pitchman's wife, said in a statement Thursday.

Manion, chief of pathology for Virtua Health, a multi-hospital health care system based in Marlton, N.J., wrote that he was asked to review the official autopsy and address "the question of whether or not cocaine was a significant contributing cause" in Mays' death.

Manion said that a review of Mays' past and family medical history indicated Mays had mild obesity, a history of smoking and two close relatives with heart conditions. "Family and friends found no evidence of symptoms or signs of chronic drug use as would be expected in a long-term chronic drug abuser," Manion states in the report. □



FILE - In this Feb. 8, 2009 file image originally released by Discovery Channel, the late TV pitchman Billy Mays is shown in Santa Monica, Calif.

(AP Photo/Discovery Communications/John Chapple)



In this Feb. 11, 2005 file photo, trays of printed social security checks wait to be mailed from the U.S. Treasury's Financial Management services facility in Philadelphia. The Social Security Administration makes it official Thursday Oct. 15, 2009: There will be no cost of living increase for Social Security recipients next year, the first year without one since automatic adjustments were adopted in 1975.

Associated Press

No Social Security COLA could prod \$250 payments

By STEPHEN OHLEMACHER

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Social Security recipients won't get a cost-of-living increase next year for the first time in more than a third of a century, and that could boost President Barack Obama's plan to send seniors another round of \$250 payments before the congressional elections. Democratic leaders in Congress have signed onto the plan, greatly improving its chances, even as some budget hawks say the payments are unwarranted and could add to the federal budget deficit. Republican leaders said they, too, favor the payments but don't want to increase the deficit to pay for them. More than 50 million Social Security recipients will see no increase in their monthly payments next year, the government said Thursday, the first year without an increase since automatic adjustments were adopted in 1975.

Blame it on falling consumer prices. By law, cost-of-living adjustments are pegged to inflation, which is negative this year because of lower energy costs. Social Security payments do not go down, even when prices drop.

Social Security recipients at a senior center in Pembroke Pines, Fla., a suburb of Fort Lauderdale, took it in stride that come January they won't see an increase in their benefits.

"At my age, I've got a nice bedroom, I have clothes, I have anything I want, I got a walker,

what else do I need?" said Marie Arrasate, 83, who ran a restaurant and candy shop with her husband in Washingtonville, N.Y., and now lives with her daughter in Pembroke Pines. "You have to make do with whatever you get. What are you gonna do? You can't do nothing about it," said Ed Nunez, 69, a retired truck driver from Miami.

The White House said the stimulus payments would cost \$13 billion, though a congressional estimate put the cost at \$14 billion. Obama didn't say how the payments should be financed, leaving that up to Congress. The president is open to borrowing the money, increasing the federal deficit, just as Congress did with the first round of stimulus payments.

Government analysts have been forecasting for months that there would be no increase next year in monthly Social Security payments because of falling consumer prices. In anticipation of Thursday's announcement, Obama said Wednesday he supported \$250 payments to about 57 million senior citizens, veterans, retired railroad workers and people with disabilities.

Seniors groups applauded the proposal, saying the recession has reduced home values and diminished retirement funds. Recipients would be limited to one payment, even if they qualified in more than one category.

Continued on Next Page

Boy feared floating away in homemade balloon found safe



In this image rendered from video and released by KMGH-TV in Denver, a hot-air balloon is seen over Colorado, near Fort Collins. Larimer County sheriff's spokeswoman Eloise Campanella says the device, which is shaped like a flying saucer, has the potential to rise to 10,000 feet.

Associated Press

IVAN MORENO

P. SOLOMON BANDA

Associated Press Writers

FORT COLLINS, Colorado (AP) — A 6-year-old Colorado boy feared to have floated off in a helium balloon was found safe at his home Thursday, hiding in a cardboard box in the garage attic.

Continued on Page B5



A view of a police station destroyed by a suicide bomb blast is seen in Kohat, Pakistan on Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009. Teams of gunmen attacked security sites Thursday across the eastern city of Lahore, paralyzing Pakistan's cultural capital, while a car bomb devastated a northwest police station, killing dozens in an escalating wave of terror in this nuclear-armed U.S. ally.

Associated Press

Militants assault police compounds in Pakistan

CHRIS BRUMMITT

Associated Press Writer

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP) — Islamist militants launched coordinated assaults on three police compounds in Pakistan's second largest city Thursday, the latest in a wave of attacks by insurgents bringing the war to the country's heartland ahead of an expected offensive against their Afghan border sanctuary.

Continued on Page B8



House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Rep. Charles Rangel, D-N.Y., which has jurisdiction over Social Security in the House, gestures during a hearing of the committee on Capitol Hill in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 15, 2009.

Associated Press

SOCIAL SECURITY

Continued from Page B1

“Without relief, millions of older Americans will be unable to afford skyrocketing health care and prescription drug costs, as well as other basic necessities,” said Tom Nelson, chief operating officer for AARP.

The payments would match the ones issued to seniors earlier this year as part of the government’s economic recovery package. They would

be equal to about a 2 percent increase for the average Social Security recipient.

Social Security has been the backbone of the nation’s safety net for older Americans since it was enacted in the 1930s. Together with Medicare, the government health insurance program for the elderly, it helps keep millions of seniors out of poverty.

The poverty rate for U.S. residents 65 and older is below the rates for other age

groups and has been for much of the past two decades. In 2008, the rate for seniors was 9.7 percent, according to the Census Bureau. That same year it was 11.7 percent for 18-to-64-year-olds and 19 percent for minors.

The average monthly Social Security payment for all recipients is \$1,094.

Some Social Security experts say recipients shouldn’t get a raise or an extra payment next year because their purchasing power has already increased with falling consumer prices. They note that Social Security payments increased by 5.8 percent this year, the biggest rise since 1982, largely because of a spike in energy prices in 2008.

Over the past 12 months, gasoline prices have fallen 29.7 percent, and overall energy costs have decreased 21.6 percent, the Labor Department said Thursday. Consumer prices in general have declined 2.1 percent since the third quarter of 2008. The cost-of-living adjustment

for Social Security, or COLA, is based on the change in consumer prices from the third quarter of one year to the next.

“The real purchasing power of their benefits is actually higher today than it was last year,” said Andrew Biggs, a former deputy commissioner at the Social Security Administration and now a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute.

“Nevertheless, there will be a big political price to pay if no COLA is granted,” Biggs said.

Obama’s proposal has picked up support from key members of Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. House Republican leader John Boehner of Ohio said he wanted to use unspent funds from last year’s stimulus legislation to offset the cost. Advocates for seniors argue that they deserve a raise because they spend a disproportionate amount of

their incomes on health care costs, which rise faster than other consumer prices.

“Any senior living in the real world knows that the cost of living has gone up over the last year,” said Sen. Charles Schumer, D-N.Y.

Obama’s plan also picked up an endorsement from Social Security Commissioner Michael J. Astrue, who was appointed to a six-year term by former President George W. Bush.

The lack of a monthly increase in payments triggers several provisions in the law. Among them, the amount of wages subject to Social Security payroll taxes will remain unchanged.

The first \$106,800 of a worker’s earned income is currently subject to the tax.

Also, Medicare Part B premiums for the vast majority of Social Security recipients will remain frozen at 2009 levels. However, premiums for the Medicare prescription drug program, known as Part D, will increase. □




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41 people in charged in mortgage fraud

LARRY NEUMEISTER

Associated Press Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A mortgage fraud crackdown announced Thursday resulted in the arrests of dozens of people, including six lawyers, seven loan officers and three mortgage brokers in four states.

Thirty-one people were arrested in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio and North

Carolina. They were among 41 people charged with engaging in mortgage fraud scams that defrauded lenders out of more than \$64 million in home mortgage loans.

Of the 10 other defendants, one was expected to surrender later Thursday, four were previously charged and five remained at large.

Authorities gathering for an afternoon news conference in

Manhattan said the crackdown, dubbed "Operation Bad Deeds," was aimed at the failure of gatekeepers in the mortgage industry to act responsibly and legally.

"Unfortunately, instead of protecting our financial system, in some cases they abused their positions and joined criminal schemes to steal millions of dollars," said Richard H. Neiman, the

Interracial couple denied marriage license in La.

By MARY FOSTER

Associated Press Writer

NEW ORLEANS — A Louisiana justice of the peace said he refused to issue a marriage license to an interracial couple out of concern for any children the couple might have. Keith Bardwell, justice of the peace in Tangipahoa Parish, says it is his experience that most interracial marriages do not last long.

"I'm not a racist. I just don't believe in mixing the races that way," Bardwell told the Associated Press on Thursday. "I have piles and piles of black friends. They come to my home, I marry them, they use my bathroom. I treat them just like everyone else."

Bardwell said he asks everyone who calls about marriage if they are a mixed race couple. If they are, he does not marry them, he said.

Bardwell said he has discussed the topic with blacks and whites, along with witnessing some interracial marriages. He came to the conclusion that most of black society does not readily accept offspring of such relationships, and neither does white society, he said.

"There is a problem with both groups accepting a child from such a marriage," Bardwell said. "I think those children suffer and I won't help put them through it."

If he did an interracial marriage for one couple, he must do the same for all, he said.

"I try to treat everyone equally," he said.

Bardwell estimates that he has refused to marry about four couples during his career, all in the past 2 1/2 years.

Beth Humphrey, 30, and 32-year-old Terence McKay, both of Hammond, say they will consult the U.S. Justice Department about filing a discrimination complaint.

Humphrey, an account manager for a marketing firm, said she and McKay, a welder, just returned to Louisiana. She is white and he is

black. She plans to enroll in the University of New Orleans to pursue a masters degree in minority politics.

"That was one thing that made this so unbelievable," she said. "It's not something you expect in this day and age."

Humphrey said she called Bardwell on Oct. 6 to inquire about getting a marriage license signed. She says Bardwell's wife told her that Bardwell will not sign marriage licenses for interracial couples. Bardwell suggested the couple go to another justice of the peace in the parish who agreed to marry them.

"We are looking forward to having children," Humphrey said. "And all our friends and co-workers have been very supportive. Except for this, we're typical happy newlyweds."

"It is really astonishing and disappointing to see this come up in 2009," said American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana attorney Katie Schwartzmann. She said the Supreme Court ruled in 1967 "that the government cannot tell people who they can and cannot marry."

The ACLU sent a letter to the Louisiana Judiciary Committee, which oversees the state justices of the peace, asking them to investigate Bardwell and recommending "the most severe sanctions available, because such blatant bigotry poses a substantial threat of serious harm to the administration of justice."

"He knew he was breaking the law, but continued to do it," Schwartzmann said.

According to the clerk of court's office, application for a marriage license must be made three days before the ceremony because there is a 72-hour waiting period. The applicants are asked if they have previously been married. If so, they must show how the marriage ended, such as divorce.

Other than that, all they need is a birth certificate and Social Security card. □



Dean Reskakis, (R) a suspect in a mortgage-fraud scheme, is escorted by FBI agents after being taken into custody in New York, October 15, 2009. The U.S. Attorney in Manhattan on Thursday announced a coordinated law enforcement operation against 41 individuals, charged in multiple mortgage fraud schemes netted tens of millions of dollars in fraudulent loans.

Reuters Photo

superintendent of banks for New York State.

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said in a statement that he found it "especially alarming" that lawyers, loan officers and mortgage brokers treated their professions as a "license to loot banks and profit from other people's pain." Those charged also included an accountant and a residential property appraiser.

Authorities said the arrests

resulted from a series of investigations conducted by state and local authorities along with federal prosecutors, the FBI, the New York State Banking Department, federal housing authorities, the U.S. Secret Service and U.S. Postal Service investigators.

Most of the bank fraud, wire fraud and conspiracy charges brought against the defendants carry potential prison terms of 20 to 30 years each. □



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Republicans fail on Guantanamo transfers to U.S.

ANDREW TAYLOR

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) —

House Democrats on Thursday repelled a Republican effort to block transfer of the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba detainees to the U.S., handing President Barack Obama a partial victory in his effort to close the prison.

Instead, by a 224-193 vote, the House stood by a Democratic plan to allow suspected enemy combatants held at the controversial facility in Cuba to be shipped to U.S. soil — but only to be prosecuted for their suspected crimes.

The Guantanamo restrictions were attached by House-Senate negotiators on a \$42.8 billion homeland security appropriations bill. The measure subsequently passed by a 307-114 vote. It next goes to the Senate for a final vote that could come as early as next week.

President Barack Obama has ordered the facility closed in January but has yet to offer a plan to meet his deadline.

Democratic leaders had to push hard to win the vote because many Democrats two weeks ago had cast a nonbinding but politically safe vote against any Guantanamo detainee transfers. But several



In this file image reviewed by the U.S. Military, the sun rises over Guantanamo detention facility, at the U.S. Naval Base, in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Nov. 19, 2008. The White House acknowledged for the first time Friday Sept. 25, 2009 that it might not be able to close the U.S. military prison at Guantanamo Bay by January as President Barack Obama has promised. Senior administration officials told The Associated Press that difficulties in completing the lengthy review of detainee files and resolving thorny legal and logistical questions mean the president's self-imposed January deadline may slip.

Democrats from swing districts said they saw little political risk on Thursday's vote.

"It's a nonissue. Inside the (Washington) Beltway stuff," said first-term Rep. Dan Maffei, a Democrat. "People care about jobs, the economy, health care."

"I haven't had one person ask me about Guantanamo," said Rep. Baron Hill, a Democrat. He added that he does "not in the least" fear it as an issue in

next year's elections.

Permitting Guantanamo prisoners to be transferred to U.S. soil to stand trial had been a bipartisan compromise earlier. It mostly tracks current restrictions put in place in June and is similar to a version backed by Republicans earlier in the year. In fact, Rep. Jerry Lewis, the top Republican member of the Appropriations panel, was among the Republicans who helped fashion the compromise.

But without a plan from the administration for closing the facility, Lewis has toughened his talk, calling the administration's plan

misguided and potentially dangerous.

"Terrorists should not be treated like common criminals in federal court," Lewis said. "These detainees are enemies of the state and should be treated as such by being held and brought to justice right where they are — in Guantanamo Bay."

Democrats say that Republicans are simply seeking a political opening. "They are now objecting to provisions that they themselves enthusiastically endorsed in the Appropriations Committee and on the House floor," said Rep. David Price, a Democrat.

White House expects thousands on fall garden tours

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE

Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON — Tens of thousands of people are expected to stream through the White House gates this weekend for a rare opportunity to see the fragrant roses, blue salvias and towering, decades-old trees that beautify the president's back yard.

Held twice a year, the fall White House Gardens and Grounds tours are set for Saturday and Sunday.

Some 25,000 visitors are expected to absorb history with every step along the South Lawn's circular driveway.

The self-guided tours, about 30-45 minutes long, include the Jacqueline Kennedy Garden near the East Wing, also known as the first lady's garden and the Rose Garden, on the opposite side and steps away from the Oval Office.

Also on the tour is the Children's Garden, a popular spot because of the footprints and handprints of presidential grandchildren —

from President Lyndon B. Johnson to George H.W. Bush — that line its walkway.

Guests can look up at the magnolia trees that towered over President Barack Obama's recent "beer summit." President Andrew Jackson had them planted in memory of his wife, Rachel, who died shortly before he took office in 1829.

At a patio table under a magnolia canopy is where Obama, Harvard scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Cambridge, Mass., police Sgt. James Crowley shared a beer and small talk in July after the officer's arrest of the professor sparked a national uproar over race relations in the U.S.

Visitors also can read about first lady Michelle Obama's produce garden. It is too far away to be part of the tour.

"In the spaces between these colorful flower beds and in the shade of these majestic trees, world leaders have met, Easter eggs have been rolled and weddings celebrated," Mrs. Obama says in the program. □



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HOMEMADE BALLOON
Continued from Page B1

Sheriff Jim Alderman turned to reporters during a news conference and gave a thumbs up and said, "He's at the house." Alderden said an investigator on the scene saw the boy and he was fine, and had apparently been in the attic the whole time.

The giant silvery helium balloon floated away from the family's yard late Thursday morning, sparking a frantic rescue operation after the boy's brother said he saw 6-year-old Falcon Heene get into the balloon.

The flying saucer-like craft, shown live on television nationwide, tipped precariously at times before gliding to the ground in a field, the culmination of a two-hour, 50-mile (80-kilometer) journey through two counties. With the child nowhere in sight, investigators searched the balloon's path. Several people reported seeing something fall from the craft while it was in the air, and yellow crime-scene tape was placed around the home.

It was not clear why the boy's brother reported seeing Falcon getting into the balloon. Kevin Kurelich, of the Colorado Division of Emergency Management, said the craft had some kind of electric power unit which was run by double-C batteries. He said the balloon did seem to be big enough to carry a 6-year-old.

Jason Humbert saw the balloon land. He said he had gotten a call from his mother in Texas who told him about the balloon. He said he was in a field checking on an oil well when he found himself surrounded by police who had been chasing the balloon, which came to a rest 12 miles northeast of Denver International Airport.

"It looked like an alien spaceship you see in those old, old movies. You know, those black-and-white ones. I came down softly. I asked a police officer if the boy was OK and he said there was no one in it," Humbert said.

Neighbor Bob Licko, 65, said he was leaving home when he heard commotion in the backyard of the family. He said he saw two boys on the roof

with a camera, commenting about their brother.

"One of the boys yelled to me that his brother was way up in the air," Licko said.

Licko said the boy's mother seemed distraught and that the boy's father was running around the house. The Poudre School District in Fort Collins, where the boys attend, did not have classes for elementary schools Thursday because of a teacher work day.

In a 2007 interview with The Denver Post, Richard Heene described becoming a storm chaser after a tornado ripped off a roof where he was working as a contractor and said he once flew a plane around Hurricane Wilma's perimeter in 2005.

Pursuing bad weather was a family activity with the children coming along as the father sought evidence to prove his theory that rotating storms create their own magnetic fields.

Although Richard said he has no specialized training, they had a computer tracking system in their car and a special motorcycle.

The Heene family appeared twice on the ABC reality show "Wife Swap," most recently in March.

"When the Heene family aren't chasing storms, they devote their time to scientific experiments that include looking for extraterrestrials and building a research-gathering flying saucer to send into the eye of the storm," it says.

While the balloon was airborne, Colorado Army



In this TV publicity image released by ABC, the Heene family, clockwise from back left, Richard, Mayumi, Ryan, Falcon and Bradford are shown at their home in Fort Collins, Colo. on Nov. 15, 2008. The Heene family were featured on the 100th episode of the ABC reality series, "Wife Swap," airing on Oct. 3, 2009.

National Guard sent a UH-58 Kiowa helicopter and was preparing to send a Black Hawk UH-60 to try to rescue the boy, possibly by lowering someone to the balloon. They also were working with pilots of ultralight aircraft on the possibility of putting weights on the homemade craft to weigh it down.

But the balloon landed on its own in a dirt field. Sheriff's deputies secured it to keep it in place, even tossing shovelfuls of dirt on one edge.

After the boy wasn't found, a Kiowa helicopter was being equipped with an infrared camera to fly at 1,000 feet and help search the area where something reportedly fell from the balloon, Army

National Guard Capt. Michael Odgers said.

The episode led to a brief shutdown of northbound departures from one of the nation's busiest airports, said a controller at the Federal Aviation Administration's radar center in Longmont, Colorado.

FAA canceled all northbound takeoffs for about 15 minutes Thursday afternoon, said Lyle Burrington, the National Air Traffic Controllers Association representative at the center. The balloon was about 15 miles northwest of the airport at that time.

Before the departure shutdown, controllers had

been vectoring planes taking off in that direction away from the balloon, Burrington said.

Federal Aviation Administration spokeswoman Laura Brown said the agency tracked the balloon through reports from pilots.

Neighbor Lisa Eklund described seeing the balloon pass.

"We were sitting eating, out looking where they normally shoot off hot air balloons. My husband said he saw something. It went over our rooftop. Then we saw the big round balloonish thing, it was spinning," she said.

"By the time I saw it, it traveled pretty fast," she said. □

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Reports: Russia warns U.S. on missile defense



MOSCOW (AP) — A top Russian diplomat suggested Thursday that the U.S. should not talk with non-NATO nations about a prospective missile shield, Russian news agencies reported. Deputy Foreign Minister

Sergei Ryabkov's remarks appeared to reflect alarm over the idea that Western-leaning neighbors such as Ukraine or Georgia, Russia's foe in a war last year, could potentially host U.S. missile defense facilities. Ryabkov said Russia is

concerned about what he said were contacts between the U.S. and nations outside NATO on missile defense, state-run ITAR-Tass and RIA Novosti reported. President Barack Obama removed a major irritant in

relations with Russia last month by scrapping U.S. plans to place interceptor missiles in Poland and a radar in the Czech Republic — deployments Russia treated as a threat. The Kremlin has praised Obama for the decision, but Russian officials have also said they want to know details about what system the U.S. will put in place instead. Ryabkov's comments served as a warning that the United States should avoid taking steps that would threaten Russia or turning to its neighbors as potential partners in missile defense without consulting with Moscow. "We are experiencing the concerns that emerge when major questions of strategic stability should be considered in a partner-like manner," he was quoted as saying. Russia and the U.S. have discussed cooperating on

missile defense, and Ryabkov represented Russia in talks on the issue in Moscow on Monday ahead of Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton's visit. Ryabkov did not name any specific nations as being in contact with the U.S. about missile defense, but he spoke in response to a question about Russian media reports suggesting the U.S. was in talks with Ukraine on the possibility of using its radar stations as part of a missile shield. The U.S. has not held negotiations with Ukraine regarding the use of Ukrainian radar stations, a U.S. Defense Department spokesman, Maj. Shawn Turner, said Thursday. Tensions over Georgia and uncertainty over the future of Ukraine, whose pro-Western president wants the country to join NATO, are hurdles in efforts by Russia and the U.S. to mend strained ties. □



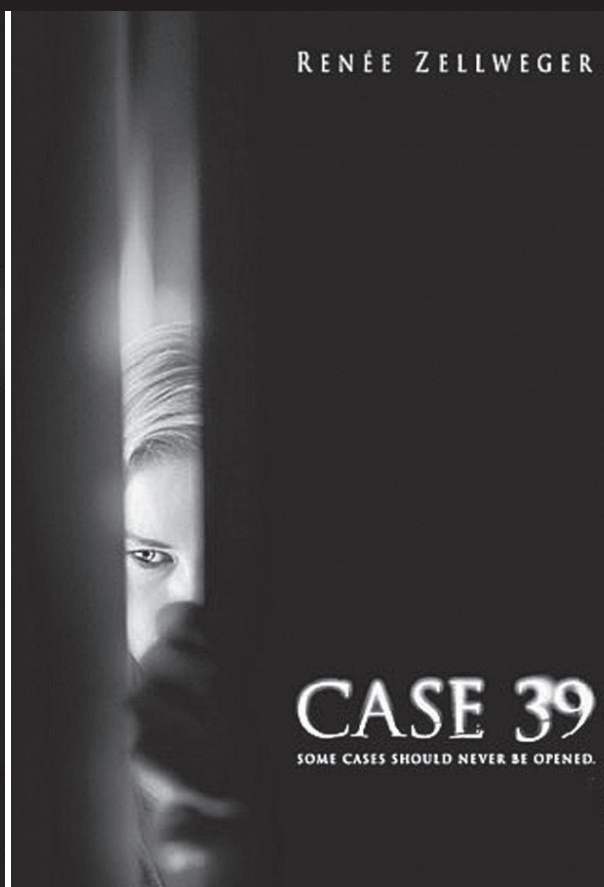
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PG-13	THE STEPFATHER	6:15	8:30	NEW
	daily:	3:45	late show:	
	matinee:	1:15	11:00	
R	SORORITY ROW	6:30	8:45	
	daily:	4:15	late show:	
	matinee:	1:45	11:00	
PG	SUSKE & WISKE	5:00		
	daily:	3:00	late show:	
	matinee:	12:45		
PG	FAME	4:30	6:45	
	daily:	12:00	2:15	
	matinee:		9:00	
			late show:	
			11:15	
R	FINAL DESTINATION 4		8:00	
	daily:		10:00	
	matinee:		12:00	
R	JENNIFER'S BODY	5:30	7:45	
	daily:	3:15	late show:	
	matinee:	1:00	12:15	
PG	TOY STORY 3D	4:00	6:00	
	daily:	2:00	late show:	
	matinee:	12:00		
R	THE INFORMANT	7:00	9:30	
	daily:		late show:	
	matinee:		12:00	

AT PASEO HERENCIA

R	THE STEPFATHER	6:00	8:30	NEW
	daily:	3:15	late show:	
	matinee:	12:45	11:15	
PG-13	SURROGATES	4:15	6:30	
	daily:	1:45	late show:	
	matinee:		11:15	
PG	TOY STORY 3D	4:15	6:15	
	daily:	2:15	late show:	
	matinee:	12:15		
PG-13	TYLER PERRY'S I CAN DO BAD ALL BY MYSELF	8:30		
	daily:		late show:	
	matinee:		11:00	
R	ZOMBIELAND	4:00	6:00	
	daily:	2:00	8:00	
	matinee:	12:00	late show:	
			12:00	
PG-13	G.I.: JOE: THE RISE OF THE COBRA	6:00		
	daily:	3:30	late show:	
	matinee:	1:00		
R	FINAL DESTINATION 4	8:15	10:15	
	daily:		late show:	
	matinee:		12:15	
R	WHITEOUT	5:15	7:30	
	daily:	3:00	late show:	
	matinee:	12:45	9:45	
			12:00	

Protests evoke apartheid era in South Africa

CELEAN JACOBSON,
Associated Press Writer
STANDERTON, South Africa (AP) — Protesters barricaded a major highway with rocks and burning tires Thursday, clashing with police who fired on them with rubber bullets. Youths retaliated with slingshots and threw rocks. The protest evoked images from decades earlier, when township residents took to the streets to fight apartheid. Now the issue is the government's failure to improve the lives of poor South African's since democracy replaced legal racial separation. More than 150 people have been arrested this week in protests that have spread from Standerton, about 90 miles (150 kilometers) southeast of Johannesburg, to at least four other towns in eastern South Africa. On Thursday, a police vehicle was set alight by protesters near a stadium that will be used for next year's World Cup in the provincial capital of Nelspruit, police spokeswoman Sibongile

Nkosi said. And miles away in Diepsloot, a poor settlement north of Johannesburg, 19 people were injured when police fired rubber bullets at protesters. Some people believe violent protests should be jettisoned in a developing democracy. Take Ellen Mgaga, an 18-year-old who should be preparing for high school final exams that start next week, but her school is closed because of protests in her town. "It's been bad what they have been doing. How am I supposed to get an education?" Mgaga said as she stood in front of the blackened remains of the library in Sakhile township on the edge of Standerton. The protests have left residents too scared to leave their homes to go to work and nearby businesses have suffered. Government clinics have been closed for fear of staff being targeted, forcing mothers with sick children or ailing old men to walk miles. The residents of Sakhile accuse the mayor and her council of

corruption and demand they resign. Most residents have water and electricity but point to the neglected sports field, dirt roads and shacks as signs of how little development there has been.

Lebogang Ganye, 23, one of the many unemployed youths who have been involved in battles with police in Sakhile, said he voted for the African National Congress in April out of loyalty to the party that ended apartheid.

"They promised us jobs, opportunities, a better life. But according to us it's a worse life," he said. "We have to vandalize things to get them to act."

A decade and a half after the end of apartheid, many South Africans feel that they have not benefited from economic growth that has made many government and ANC officials rich.

Jacob Zuma, a popular figure among the poor who won the presidency in the April vote, promised to speed up delivery of houses, clinics, schools, running water and electricity as well as create jobs. But he also has acknowledged the difficulties amid South Africa's first recession in nearly two decades.

"Without a shadow of a doubt the protests have got worse since the elections," said Udesch Pillay, head of the Center for Service Delivery at the Human Sciences Research Council.

"This will escalate and it will



A Johannesburg Metro police officer shoots at a pleading man in the Diepsloot township, 30 km north of Johannesburg, South Africa, Thursday Oct. 15, 2009. Some hundreds of demonstrators protesting against poor service delivery and lack of housing set up barricades in the township.

Associated Press

escalate fast." Zuma, who paid a surprise visit in August to a town that saw earlier protests, has been responsive to concerns and is still held in high regard, but people have grown increasingly "suspicious and less enthused" about other party representatives, Pillay said.

The protests are being fueled to a great extent by concerns over corruption and disengagement with local governments. Municipalities have long been South Africa's weakest tier of government. Many local councils are financially strapped, mismanaged or riddled with corruption. They are also carry the greatest loads. Municipal managers are battling to overcome decades of apartheid planning that saw white suburbs well-served while black people lived in

abysmal conditions on the edges of towns and cities.

The violence has also been blamed on politicking ahead of 2011 municipal elections. Others say it is the work of troublemakers.

"This has nothing to do with service delivery. This is criminal," said Chris Nkosi, a senior official from the district mayor's office, as he surveyed the gutted municipal offices in Siyathuthuka, one of the eastern South African townships hit by protests this week.

The building, its wooden beams turned to lumps of ash and its zinc ceiling twisted and peeling, was built in 1999. It housed a library, which had just received a new stock of books.

"If you are crying for services, how can you do this?" Nkosi said. "It makes no sense." □

Men found guilty of Australian terror plot

SYDNEY (AP) — Five men were convicted Friday of plotting a terrorist attack by stockpiling bomb-making instructions and purchasing explosive chemicals in Australia's largest terrorist conspiracy.

A jury deliberated for a month before finding the men guilty of conspiring to commit acts in preparation for a terrorist attack. Each face a maximum sentence of life in prison.

During the trial, which began in November 2008, prosecutor Richard Maidment told the jury in New South Wales state Supreme Court that the men planned to use explosive devices or firearms to commit "extreme violence" in a bid to force Australia's government to change its policy on Middle East conflicts.

Justice Anthony Whealy restricted the media from publishing the men's names on the Internet.

The men were arrested in a series of raids on their homes in 2005. Maidment said during the trial that the raids turned up bomb-making instructions and militant Islamist material — including footage of planes flying into the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001, and images of beheadings. The prosecutor also said the men purchased explosive chemicals and guns between July 2004 and November 2005.

The jury was also told one man participated in a terrorist-run paramilitary training camp in Pakistan, and three others attended similar camps in New South Wales to prepare for an attack.

Whealy had instructed the jury to put aside any prejudices when coming to its verdict, and to remember the Muslim faith was not on trial. □



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MILITANTS ASSAULT*Continued from Page B1*

The dramatic escalation in violence appears to be an attempt by the Taliban- and al-Qaida-led insurgency to seize the initiative from the army and deliver a warning to the U.S.-backed civilian government: Attack us in South Waziristan and we will fight back in your cities.

It also discredits Pakistani claims that the Taliban were on the ropes after this year's military campaign in the Swat Valley and the killing of their leader, Baitullah Mehsud, in a U.S. airstrike in August.

The United States wants Pakistan's army to launch the operation in South Waziristan to root out militants who use the remote mountainous region as a base for attacks in Afghanistan, where the American war effort is faltering amid spiraling violence eight years after the invasion.

Thursday's assaults in Lahore added to a sense of crisis in this nuclear-armed country, now shaken by five major attacks by the Islamic extremists in the last 10 days that have killed more than 150 people — including a 22-hour siege of army headquarters over the weekend.

At least 19 people were killed in the Lahore attacks, most

of them security officers, along with nine heavily armed attackers.

Gunmen in all three attacks carried dried fruit and apparently were preparing to dig in for a long siege, said Rana Sanaullah, the provincial law minister.

"We are here to lay down our lives for Islam. Jihad will continue," two attackers shouted before blowing themselves up, according to one police officer. Most of the militants detonated suicide belts after they were injured or cornered to avoid capture, witnesses said.

One of the targets in Lahore was a training center for an elite police unit tasked with fighting militants. Many of the trainers there had received instruction from U.S. law enforcement officials under a little-publicized State Department program, officials said.

Suspicion fell on the Pakistani Taliban but it made no public claim of responsibility. Geo TV reported on its Web site that that group had confessed, but did not attribute the information.

Two officials said initial investigations showed Taliban from the Afghan border region and militants from the Punjab province were responsible.

Such a link would be further evidence of increased coordination among militant groups, posing a new threat to the government.

"This was a well-coordinated Taliban operation supported by local groups," Umer Virk, the head of the Lahore anti-terrorist police, told The Associated Press. He said two of the militants appeared to be Uzbeks.

Militants have now struck Lahore four times this year, including previous attacks on two of the compounds targeted Thursday.

Lahore, some 350 miles from South Waziristan, is a bustling city known for its liberal arts scene. The city is home to many of the Pakistan's political and military elite and is the capital of Pakistan's most populated province, Punjab.

The assaults began about 9 a.m. when a gunman wearing civilian clothes and a suicide vest burst into the offices of the Federal Investigation Agency, the national law enforcement body, and began shooting, Sanaullah said. The attacker killed two men and four civilians, but was slain by guards before he could detonate his explosives.

Soon after, four gunmen raided a police training school on the outskirts of the city, killing 11



officers and recruits before police killed all the attackers. A third team then scaled the back wall of a police commando training center near the airport. The attackers stood on the roof of a house, shooting at security forces and throwing grenades, said Lt. Gen. Shafqat Ahmad, the top military officer in Lahore.

The four assailants were killed, along with a police officer and a civilian, Sanaullah said.

Virk said officers seized 27 unexploded hand grenades, 50 pounds of explosives and one light machine gun.

Security officials said most of the gunmen were wearing suicide vests and blew themselves up when cornered. "They were not here to live. They were here to die," said government official Sajjad Bhutta. "Each time they were injured, they blew themselves up," he said. "They were well trained to the extent they could jump over the walls and shoot well."

The attacks may have been timed partly to take advantage of a rift between the government and the army over a \$7.5 billion U.S. aid package intended to symbolize U.S. support for the country's democratic transition after years of military rule, as well as its anti-terror fight.

The army and opposition politicians say conditions attached to some of the military assistance constitute American meddling and threaten Pakistan's sovereignty. The Pakistani government and the U.S. deny this.

The outcry over the aid package is another headache for the Obama administration, which is reviewing Afghan strategy amid a resurgent Taliban, Afghan elections

marred by large-scale fraud allegations and increasing doubts over how long to stay in the country.

"Taliban forces operating inside Pakistan and across the border understand that international strategy at the moment is in disarray," said Farzana Shaikh, assistant fellow at London think-tank Chatham House.

"Militants groups inside Pakistan understand there is potentially a conflict building up between the military, the U.S. and the Pakistani government. Set this against anti-American feeling inside Pakistan, and the militants feel they have a mood they can exploit," Shaikh said.

The Taliban have claimed responsibility for a wave of major attacks that began with an Oct. 5 strike on the U.N. food agency in Islamabad and included a siege of the army's headquarters in the garrison city of Rawalpindi that left 23 people dead.

President Asif Ali Zardari said the bloodshed over the past two weeks would not deter the government from its mission to eliminate violent extremists.

"The enemy has started a guerrilla war," Interior Minister Rehman Malik said. "The whole nation should be united against these handful of terrorists, and God willing we will defeat them."

The Pakistani army has given no time frame for its expected offensive in the South Waziristan tribal region. It has reportedly already sent two divisions totaling 28,000 men and blockaded the area. Analysts say that with winter approaching, any push would likely have to begin soon to be successful. □

Expert: Husband was near victim in BVI scuba death

MASON MARCUS,
Associated Press Writer

TORTOLA, British Virgin Islands (AP) — A Rhode Island man accused of killing his wife during a scuba dive was near her when she died, an expert testified Thursday, despite the defendant's claim that the two went their separate ways underwater.

Dr. Tom Neuman, an expert in diving deaths, said medical reports indicate that Shelley Tyre stopped breathing at a point in the dive when her husband, David Swain, could still have been nearby.

Swain said he and his wife descended together and headed toward a wreck site off the British Virgin Islands and then parted ways. Swain later surfaced without his wife, and another diver found her body.

Neuman testified it would have taken about seven minutes to reach the wreck site, and Tyre stopped breathing about eight minutes into the dive.

A torn mask and a fin jammed into the sand near her body "bespeaks some sort of violent activity," Neuman said.

His testimony echoed that of Dr. Bruce Allen Hyma, chief pathologist at Schneider Hospital in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Hyma said the air in Tyre's tank was not contaminated, and that she did not have any diseases or scuba-related illnesses.

"This death is not a natural death. It is not a suicide. It is not an accident. It is a homicidal drowning," Hyma said Wednesday.

Swain has maintained his innocence, and defense lawyer Hayden St. Claire-Douglas alleged that Tyre, 46, was drinking the night before her death and that she panicked during the dive.

Neuman rejected that explanation.

"This is a pretty benign place to dive," he said.

"There is not a lot there that would cause a diver to panic."

Prosecutors allege that Swain, 53, killed his wife during a 1999 trip to the Caribbean to pursue another woman, Mary Besler.

Experts have testified that they believe Swain wrestled Tyre from behind, tore off her mask and shut off her air supply.

The death was ruled an accidental drowning. But Swain was charged with murder after a jury found him responsible in 2006 following a civil trial. Swain was extradited to the British Virgin Islands in 2007 and has been in jail since. □

Auschwitz memorial launches Facebook page

MONIKA SCISLOWSKA

Associated Press Writer

WARSAW, Poland (AP)

— To try to reach young people around the world, the memorial museum at Auschwitz has launched a page on Facebook, the social networking site usually home to news and photos about friends, funny videos and the minutiae of modern life.

The page aims to be a forum for discussion, reflection and learning about the Nazi death camp, and many people have left a simple message in English, Hebrew and Polish: “Never again.”

Since opening this week, the page has drawn more than 1,800 “fans,” who have subscribed, and the number is growing by the hour. About 1,000 signed up on Thursday alone.

Pawel Sawicki, a spokesman for the Auschwitz memorial, said the museum viewed its venture onto the popular site as “kind of an experiment.”

“Facebook is the tool that young people are using to communicate, so if we want to reach them, we should be using their tool,” Sawicki told The Associated Press.

The attention that the page has generated took the museum by surprise.

“We were expecting large interest, but not so soon,” Sawicki said.

Other organizations that deal with the legacy of the Holocaust already have ventured onto Facebook. The Simon Wiesenthal Center counts more than 2,000 “fans” on its site and also has used Twitter.

The U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum launched its Facebook page in 2008 and has more than 5,500 fans. It also is on Twitter and YouTube.

“Facebook is just another way to reach people,” said David Klevan, the education manager for technology and distance learning at the Washington museum. “Just like museums often hold programs in coffee shops or other places in their local communities, this is

where people gather — they gather on Facebook.”

Efraim Zuroff of the Wiesenthal Center in Jerusalem said the idea of using the Internet is “to reach out to as many people as possible.”

Although the Web is also rife with far-right sites that attempt to distort or deny the Holocaust, Zuroff said that was no reason for others to dismiss using it.

“The vehicle depends on the content,” he said. “If the content is helpful, if the content is educational, there’s no reason not to use the vehicle.”

There’s been no suggestion that Facebook is an inappropriate place to discuss the Holocaust and Auschwitz, a potent symbol of Nazi Germany’s attempt to eliminate European Jewry.

“I don’t think Facebook is the worst place for education, and let’s be honest — the world has changed,” said Piotr Kadlcik, the head of Poland’s Jewish community.

“Facebook can be such a place, and I don’t see anything dangerous or wrong about the Auschwitz museum having a profile on it.”

Facebook turned five years old this year and has more than 175 million users worldwide. There are scores of Facebook groups dedicated to Auschwitz started by individuals, but the page — found by searching the site with the keywords “Auschwitz Memorial” — allows people to take part in discussions moderated by the memorial’s staff.

So far, the site has seen no postings by Holocaust deniers, Sawicki said. If they do show up, they will be removed quickly, he said, adding that engaging such people in dialogue is “a waste of time.”

“I think we have more important things to do than try to convince a very small group of people” that the Holocaust happened, he said.

The Facebook venture is not the museum’s first attempt to take advantage of new technologies to reach a broader audience. It

launched a Polish-language channel on YouTube in 2008 and an English-language page two months ago. Some 22,000 people have viewed the video so far.

“You can see that although many years have passed since the Holocaust, this is still an important reference point for people and that each generation has its own thoughts and reflections on it,” Sawicki said.

Between 1940-45, some 1 million people, mostly Jews, were killed or died of starvation, disease and forced labor at the camp, which the Nazis built in occupied Poland. Sawicki said the



A woman checks a Facebook page for the former Nazi death camp of Auschwitz, for the Auschwitz Museum, in Warsaw, Poland, Oct. 15, 2009. The Auschwitz museum has launched a page on the Internet based Facebook site, in the hope of reaching young people, offering information but also an opportunity for discussion with the participation of the museum staff.

Associated Press

memorial’s 1 million annual visitors are primarily students and other young people.

There is an unofficial Facebook

page dedicated to Israel’s Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial, which says it plans an official page in the coming weeks. □

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NHL Roundup

Prospal scores 2, including 200th, in Rangers win

NEW YORK (AP) — Vinny Prospal scored twice — including his 200th NHL goal — during first-period power plays as the New York Rangers stretched their winning streak to six games with a 4-2 victory over the Los Angeles Kings on Wednesday.

Prospal added an assist on Marian Gaborik's sixth of the season that made it 4-2 in the third. Gaborik has 10 points this season — at least one in all seven games.

The Rangers swept a three-game homestand in four days. Former Kings forward Brian Boyle added a second-period goal, and Henrik Lundqvist stopped 34 shots.

Ryan Smyth and Michal Handzus scored for Los Angeles, which had won four in a row.

Penguins 3, Hurricanes 2, SO

At Raleigh, North Carolina, Chris Kunitz beat Cam Ward on the 12th shot of a shootout to help Pittsburgh improve to 5-0 on the road for the first time in team history.

Evgeni Malkin and Michael Rupp scored in regulation for the Stanley Cup champion Penguins.

Ray Whitney scored twice for Carolina, helping the Hurricanes rally from a 2-0 deficit to force overtime in the first meeting between the teams since Pittsburgh

swept Carolina in the Eastern Conference finals.

Blackhawks 4, Oilers 3

At Chicago, Patrick Sharp, Kris Versteeg, Jack Skille and Cam Barker scored against former teammate Nikolai Khabibulin to help Chicago beat Edmonton.

Mostly a high-priced disappointment during his four years in Chicago but a standout last season in the Blackhawks' run to the Western Conference finals, Khabibulin made 34 saves. He stopped Sharp on a penalty shot in the second period.

Andrew Cogliano, Dustin Penner and Denis Grebeshkov scored for Edmonton.

Stars 6, Predators 0

At Dallas, Brenden Morrow scored twice in the opening four minutes of Dallas'

four-goal first period, while Marty Turco stopped 29 shots for his 37th career shutout in the Dallas' victory over Nashville.

Brad Richards added a goal and two assists, and Loui Eriksson had a goal and an assist during the first-period outburst to help the Stars win at home for the first time this season. Eriksson completed a two-goal night on a second-period power play, and Toby Petersen added a third-period goal.

Ducks 3, Wild 2

At Anaheim, California, Corey Perry scored two goals in the first 8 1/2 minutes, and Jonas Hiller made 32 saves as Anaheim edged Minnesota.

Ryan Carter also scored for the Ducks, who returned from a four-game trip to open a six-game homestand.



Los Angeles Kings goalie Erik Ersberg attempts to stop a shot on the goal by New York Rangers' Vinny Prospal (20), of the Czech Republic, as teammate Ryan Callahan (24) looks on during the first period of an NHL hockey game Wednesday, Oct. 14, 2009, in New York. Prospal scored two goals including his 200th game in the NHL during first-period power plays and the New York Rangers stretched their winning streak to six games with a 4-2 victory over the Los Angeles Kings.

Associated Press

Niklas Backstrom stopped Brunette scored for the 32 shots, and Eric Belanger Wild, 1-4-0 under new coach Todd Richards. □

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Honduras, en busca acuerdo final sobre futuro Zelaya

TEGUCIGALPA (Reuters) - Un acuerdo final para superar la crisis de Honduras desatada por el golpe de Estado estaba en suspenso el jueves, mientras los negociadores trataban de definir el espinoso tema del eventual retorno al poder del derrocado líder Manuel Zelaya.

Los representantes del Gobierno de facto y del depuesto mandatario estaban confiados en que la salida a la crisis, que divide al país, se encontraba a la vuelta de la esquina tras haber alcanzado el miércoles un acuerdo preliminar sobre siete de los ocho puntos del pacto.

Pero sobre el punto medular del acuerdo, el regreso de Zelaya al poder después de haber sido depuesto por militares el 28 de junio, las posiciones seguían divididas. A pesar de que un asesor del depuesto mandatario dijo que se había alcanzado el miércoles un consenso total en el texto del acuerdo, el equipo negociador del presidente de facto Roberto Micheletti sostiene que todavía no se ha llegado a coincidencia sobre el retorno de Zelaya al poder. Sin embargo, los representantes parecían hacer esfuerzos por llegar a un acuerdo. En un receso, los negociadores de Zelaya partieron el jueves por



El depuesto presidente de Honduras, Manuel Zelaya, participa en una reunión en Tegucigalpa, 15 oct 2009. REUTERS/Edgard Garrido

la tarde para reunirse y hacer consultas con el derrocado presidente.

“Vamos a retomar otra vez la mesa de las negociaciones (...) para escuchar las propuestas y contrapropuestas”, dijo a periodistas Víctor Meza, de la comisión negociadora de Zelaya, desde la embajada de Brasil en Tegucigalpa, donde el líder está refugiado.

Zelaya fue derrocado y expulsado del país a punta de rifle bajo el argumento de haber violado la Constitución con sus intentos de convocar

a un referéndum para reformar la carta magna a fin de allanar camino para la reelección presidencial, una consulta que había sido prohibida por la justicia.

Después de infructuosas negociaciones diplomáticas en Costa Rica, Zelaya volvió

clandestinamente a su país y se refugió en la embajada brasileña, que está cercada por decenas de militares y policías con órdenes de arrestarlo.

Sin embargo, desde hace una semana, con la mediación de la Organización de Estados Americanos (OEA) las partes

se volvieron a sentar a la mesa de diálogo, aunque la restitución de Zelaya antes de las elecciones del 29 de noviembre sigue siendo la manzana de la discordia de las negociaciones. “No hay absolutamente ninguna propuesta definitiva, hay una serie de propuestas que se están discutiendo (...) no hay ningún rompimiento de las negociaciones”, dijo a Reuters la negociadora Vilma Morales, del equipo del Gobierno de facto. Micheletti ha dicho que Zelaya debe rendir cuentas ante la justicia por violar la Constitución y que es la Corte Suprema quien tiene que decidir si se restituye al líder derrocado en el poder.

“Mantenemos firmes en el reclamo de la restitución al poder del presidente Manuel Zelaya tal como se establece en el acuerdo de San José respaldado por la comunidad internacional”, dijo a periodistas Mayra Mejía, negociadora del equipo de Zelaya, antes de entrar a la reunión el jueves. □

Huelga contra despidos perturba capital de Puerto Rico

SAN JUAN (Reuters) - Trabajadores públicos de Puerto Rico protestaron el jueves por los despidos en instituciones del Gobierno causando interrupciones en los servicios de algunas agencias oficiales, comercios y escuelas.

Los sindicatos de trabajadores del territorio estadounidense en las islas caribeñas llamaron a un paro de 24 horas para protestar por el despido de miles de trabajadores del Gobierno, que trata de contraer un déficit presupuestario de 3.200 millones de dólares. El gobernador Luis Fortuno, que el mes pasado anunció el despido de 17.000 trabajadores públicos, pidió calma y dijo que los despidos eran necesarios para evitar un descenso mayor en la calificación crediticia de la isla.

“Nadie apoya los despidos, pero no había otra opción”, dijo a la prensa local. Más de 4.000 trabajadores fueron despedidos en junio. La tasa de desempleo en Puerto Rico estaba en 15,8 por ciento en agosto, más alta que en cualquier estado estadounidense. □

Disponen investigar caminata de Fujimori fuera de su celda en Perú

LIMA (AFP) - Fotografías del ex presidente peruano Alberto Fujimori paseando fuera de su celda y al margen del área permitida en el interior de una base policial donde cumple prisión obligaron a las autoridades a disponer este jueves una rápida investigación.

“He pedido una investigación y si hay alguien a quien sancionar se sancionará”, dijo el ministro de Justicia, Aurelio Pastor, quien descartó que pueda existir un peligro de fuga del ex mandatario de 71 años. “No hay absolutamente peligro de fuga”, afirmó. Las imágenes fueron difundidas por el programa de televisión Prensa Libre de América Televisión la noche del miércoles y publicadas este jueves por el diario La República.

El ministerio del Interior dispuso en un comunicado que la Policía Nacional “realice una exhaustiva investigación sobre la actuación” del coronel Germán Flores, jefe de la sede de la Dirección de Operaciones Especiales de la Policía, donde está preso el

ex gobernante.

En las dos fotos, se ve al oficial Flores acompañando a Fujimori, quien está vestido con campera y gorra, y con las manos en los bolsillos. El abogado César Nakazaki, defensor del ex presidente, señaló que las autoridades penitenciarias no han reportado ninguna irregularidad y negó que su patrocinado estuviera en una “cárcel dorada”.

Gloria Cano, abogada de víctimas de violaciones a los derechos humanos que motivaron la condena al ex mandatario, estimó que si Fujimori ha salido fuera del área que se le ha asignado ha violado el régimen penitenciario.

El ex mandatario cumple una sentencia de 25 años de cárcel por la matanza de 25 personas durante su gobierno (1990-2000) durante la guerra interna contra la guerrilla maoísta Sendero Luminoso. Esa condena está en apelación en la Corte Suprema, que debe dar su palabra final en los próximos meses. □

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